

MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES SERVICES
May 4, 2016
Booneville Human Development Center
Booneville, Arkansas

The regular meeting of the Board of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS) was held May 4, 2016 at the Booneville Human Development Center in Booneville, Arkansas. The meeting convened at 10:30 a.m. pursuant to the call of the Board Chair.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Board Chair Mr. Randy Laverty, Ms. Sally Hardin, Ms. Suzann McCommon, Mr. Darrell Pickney and Dr. Linda Selman.

STAFF PRESENT: DDS Director Ms. Melissa Stone, Mr. Jeff Gonyea, Mr. Glenn Clark, Ms. Sarah Murphy, Ms. Debbie Eddington, Mr. Forrest Steele, Mr. Steve Farmer, Ms. Avis Lane, Ms. Tammy Benbrook, Mr. Henry Jones, Mr. Dale Woodall and Mr. Tommy Tarpley.

OTHERS PRESENT: Ms. Jan Fortney, Ms. Carole Sherman, Booneville HDC staff, parents and family members of HDC residents, Mr. Christian Adcock from Disability Rights Arkansas and Mr. Andy Davis from the Arkansas Democrat Gazette.

Mr. Laverty called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone in attendance and thanked Booneville HDC Superintendent Jeff Gonyea for hosting the DDS Board meeting.

Mr. Laverty called for a motion to approve the minutes from the February 19, 2016 regular meeting of the DDS Board. Mr. Pickney made a motion that the minutes be approved. Ms. McCommon seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

As there were no subcommittee reports to present Mr. Laverty invited consumers, advocates and guests to address the Board.

Ms. Carole Sherman, parent of an Arkadelphia HDC resident, thanked the DDS Board, HDC Superintendents and staff for their support of human development centers and residents. Ms. Sherman shared her concern regarding current HDC funding and inquired as to whether Bed Tax funds generated by ICF could be allocated for Booneville HDC capital improvements. Mr. Laverty and Ms. McCommon advised that of the funds appropriated by the Legislature a portion have been assigned to contracts currently in place. Ms. Stone will inquire if there are funds available that have not yet been designated.

Ms. Jan Fortney, parent of a Conway HDC resident, addressed the Board regarding HDC funding approval announced during the April 26th Joint Budget Committee and how these funds would be distributed. Mr. Laverty advised the funds are directed to the General Improvement Fund and could not be allocated for specific uses.

Mr. Jeff Gonyea, Superintendent of Booneville HDC, presented the report for the Human Development Centers and reminded the Board that monthly reports for the HDCs were included in the Board packets. Mr. Gonyea presented items of interest about each HDC along with information regarding recent positive CARF and OLTC surveys. Ms. Murphy added that during a meeting with Governor Hutchinson, he expressed optimism and support for the HDCs.

Mr. Laverty thanked Ms. Sherman and Ms. Fortney for their statements and Mr. Gonyea for the HDC updates. He then shared with the Board his enthusiasm over the approval of the Arkansas Works Program. He conveyed the how the state will benefit from continued healthcare coverage for Arkansans.

DDS Director Melissa Stone updated the Board on DDS staff changes and additions. Mischa Martin has moved to DCFS as Interim Director and is working with DDS to recruit foster parents for children with developmental delays. Debbie Eddington now serves as Interim Superintendent of the Jonesboro Human Development Center. Forrest Steele is the Direct Services Manager for the HDCs. Assistant Director Henry Jones supervises Licensure, Quality Assurance, IT and Community Outreach. Assistant Director Tommy Tarpley oversees contracts and grants.

Ms. Stone and the HDC Superintendents attended the Health Reform Legislative Task Force Subcommittee meeting on April 5th. Subcommittee members include Senator Jason Rapert, Senator Jonathan Dismang, Representative Deborah Ferguson and Representative Kim Hammer. Ms. Stone provided the subcommittee with an overview of the HDCs and supplied follow up information regarding land values and appraisals, superintendent contact information, Arkansas HDC daily rates versus daily rates in other states, capital improvement updates, current waiting list statistics, staff turnover and entry level pay rates for direct care service workers. Ms. Stone is also arranging HDC visits for the subcommittee members.

Mr. Laverty thanked the Superintendents for their attendance and recognized the importance of such a show of support. Mr. Pickney concurred and asked the Superintendents to outline for the Board their top concerns. These concerns included capital improvements, recruiting, staff turnover, salary reconfiguration/competitive pay and direct care.

Ms. Hardin, on behalf of the Board, thanked Ms. Fortney and Ms. Sherman for their tireless efforts and valued assistance they give to all HDCs.

Mr. Laverty called for a motion for the meeting be adjourned. Ms. McCommon made a motion for the meeting be adjourned. Ms. Hardin seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

ATTEST:


Mr. Randy Laverty, Chair, Board of DDS


Executive Secretary